

Amendments To the Claims:

1.-49. (cancelled)

50. (currently amended) An automation system for the graduated, usage-equivalent automatic licensing of multifunctional and/or expandable software products, comprising:

an integration platform to integrate selected ones of a plurality of software products purveyed by a licensor to a systems integrator through the system, the integration platform being arranged by the systems integrator to form a Manufacturing Execution System (MES) to control an automated production process, wherein the integration platform comprises an adaptor base, wherein the adaptor base is adaptable by the systems integrator to create respective application-specific adaptors, wherein a control solution provided by the systems integrator to an end user of the automated production process comprises at least one of the following: a first group of software products as integrated by the systems integrator in the integration platform without application-specific adaptors, and a second group of software products as integrated by the systems integrator and further including application-specific adaptors, wherein the control solution is purveyed by the systems integrator to the end user through said system, wherein the control solution can be expanded by the systems integrator to include additional software products and/or application-specific adaptors based on new functionality provided by the additional software products and/or application-specific adaptors;

a first mechanism for detecting functionality used and for comparing this with already licensed functionality of a software product;

a second mechanism for providing information regarding functionality used but not yet licensed;

a third mechanism for generating time-limited authorization to use functionality not yet licensed;

a fourth mechanism for generating an order and/or a request for an offer to the licensor;

a fifth mechanism for creating a license by the licensor; and

a sixth mechanism for permanently authorizing use of the functionality licensed by the system, wherein a license fee is based on the following: a volume of data managed by the